

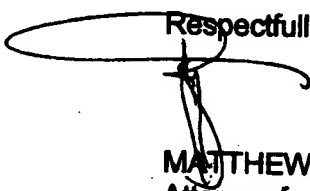


As provided for in MPEP 708.02 X, Applicant agrees to the special examining procedure detailed therein. In support of the Petition, Applicant submits a Statement from the inventor, Hooman A. Asbaghi, explaining how "the invention contributes to the diagnosis, treatment or prevention of HIV/AIDS or cancer."

Accordingly, in view of the importance of preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS, and the desirability of prompt disclosure of advances made in this field, Applicant requests that this Petition to Make Special be granted and the application undergo accelerated examination.

DATED this 31st day of May, 2002.

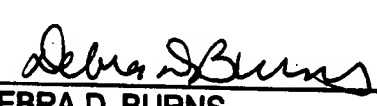
Respectfully submitted,


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR §1.8

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Hon. Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, D.C. 20231, on this 31st day of May, 2002.


DEBRA D. BURNS
Legal Document Assistant

Transmitted: Petition to Make Special, Statement in Support of Petition to Make Special and Check No. 13974 for \$130.00.

petitionspecial:ddb
Docket: 11311.1

OK to Enter



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PATENT

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL
(37 CFR §1.102(d) and MPEP 708.02 X)

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As the below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

I believe that my invention, as disclosed in the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought in the invention entitled, SELF-SHEATHING DENTAL NEEDLE, will prevent the spread of HIV by preventing needlestick injuries and the inadvertent reuse of contaminated syringes.

According to a clinical report published in the September 1997 issue of JADA, during a 63-month period, in which 423 parenteral exposures to blood and bodily fluids were documented, dental students and dental assistants had the highest rate of exposure; syringe needle injuries were the most common type of exposure; and giving injections, cleaning instruments after procedures and drilling were the activities most frequently associated with exposure. In addition, a study published in the July 1998 report of the CDC reported that 17% of all needlestick injuries to New York City healthcare workers occurred among dental workers. Each accidental needlestick has the potential to expose a health care worker to a life-threatening virus such as HIV / AIDS.


The present invention is directed to a dental syringe having a disposable needle cartridge that remains in a guarded and locked configuration until engagement with a syringe body. A sheath is provided to passively cover the needle during withdrawal of the needle from the patient. At the completion of an injection, the sheath is locked over the tip of the needle to prevent accidental needlesticks or inadvertent reuse of the syringe.

In greater detail, the above-cited patent application describes a self-sheathing dental needle that includes a finger grip slideably mounted to a syringe body and a plunger to expel a fluid medicament from the syringe body. The finger grip is formed with a tang that is positioned near the distal end of the syringe body when the finger grip is fully advanced in the distal direction. A needle cartridge is provided having a needle mounted in a needle holder, a sheath slideably mounted to the needle holder, and a lock body for locking the sheath in position over the distal end of the needle. When the cartridge is attached to the syringe body and aligned, the lock body can be reconfigured to release the sheath for movement relative to the needle. Specifically, the finger grip can be translated to cause the tang to engage the lock body, release the sheath, and expose the distal end of the needle for an injection. During withdrawal of the needle from the patient, a spring biases the sheath to passively cover the needle, locking the sheath over the tip of the needle to prevent accidental needlesticks or inadvertent reuse of the syringe.

In light of the above, I believe that my disclosed and claimed invention contained in the specification of the above referenced patent application provides a device that will prevent the spread of HIV by preventing needlestick injuries and the inadvertent reuse of contaminated syringes.

Signed at San Diego, California, this 31st day of May, 2002.

Inventor _____


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stmts special:ddb
Docket: 11311.1